

ILLINOIS WATERWAY, PROJECT OFFICE
257 Grant Street
Peoria
Peoria
Illinois

HAER IL-164-C
IL-164-C

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

ILLINOIS WATERWAY, PROJECT OFFICE

HAER No. IL-164-C

Location: 257 Grant Street, Peoria, Illinois, on Illinois River
Latitude: 40.7018369, Longitude: -89.5636558

Present Owner: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District

Present Use: Maintenance of vessels associated with operation and maintenance of Illinois Waterway

Significance: The Project Office is significant for its association with the maintenance and operation of the Illinois Waterway, built to provide a navigable route from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River and beyond.

Historian: Justine Christianson, HAER Historian, 2008

Project Information: The Illinois Waterway Recording Project (2007-2008) is part of the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), a long-range program to document historically significant engineering and industrial works in the United States. HAER is administered by the Heritage Documentation Programs, a division of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Richard O'Connor, Manager. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) funded the project. Ron Deiss, USACE, and Dana Lockett, HAER Architect, served as project managers. Dana Lockett and Anne Kidd produced the measured drawings. Large format photography was done by Brian Grogan. Justine Christianson wrote the historical reports. Research assistance was provided by John Fitzgerald, Archivist, USACE.

Part I. Historical Information

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Construction: (1913, 1922, 1930s)

The harbor and marine ways date to 1913.¹

Various buildings were also constructed on the site, including a Pattern Storage Building (Building No. 304) and Office (Building No. 301) around 1922. The 1930s saw a flurry of building activity, no doubt due to the Army Corps' acquisition and subsequent completion of the Illinois Waterway. Structures built included a Storage and Shops Building (Building No. 306), Garage (Building No. 303), and two Paint Sheds (Building Nos. 305 and 307).²

2. Architect/Engineer:

The designers of the various buildings are generally unknown, although they were probably U.S. Army Corps staff. Drawings from 1922 indicate James R. Fuller was the architect for the original office, although it is unclear if he was in charge of the initial design or a later remodeling.³ Ron Mott designed the new office.⁴

3. Builder/Contractor/Supplier:

The builders are generally unknown. Vanguard Construction built the new office.⁵

4. Original Plans:

A drawing from the 1970s shows the layout of the 10.11 acre site, which was bounded at the northeast by marine ways and at the south and west by a boat harbor sheltered from the Illinois River. A line of buildings located along the northern edge of the property, included from west to east the Equipment Storage Building (Building No. 302), the Garage (No. 303), the Pattern Storage Building (No. 304) and then the Hose House (No. 305). Set off to the northwest of the marine ways was the Oil House (No. 307). The largest building on the site was the Storage and Shops Building (No. 306), located to the west of the marine ways. North of the boat harbor was an Office Building (No. 301) with a vault and radio tower to the west.⁶

¹ Mary Yeater Rathburn, American Resources Group, Ltd., "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway between 130th Street in Chicago and La Grange," Volume 2, prepared for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, Rock Island, Illinois, October 1996, pp. 405-408.

² Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, p. 411-420.

³ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 647-648. This survey indicates the office may originally have been built at Camp Grant in Rockford, Illinois ca. 1916-17 and then moved to the site after World War I.

⁴ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, p. 423.

⁵ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, p. 423.

⁶ Corps of Engineers, Chicago, Illinois, "Government Moorings at Peoria, Illinois Waterway, Illinois," September 30, 1977, available at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District.

5. Alterations and Additions:

The Office (Building No. 301), a 2,130 square foot, two story frame building, was removed post-1995 after the completion of the new office.⁷ Along the northern edge of the harbor, a Garage and Machine Welding Building (Building No. 304) were constructed.⁸

B. Historical Context:

The U.S. Army Corps opened a boatyard and marine ways at Peoria in 1913 for maintenance of its boat and barge fleet, which operated on the lower Illinois River. At that time, the Army Corps maintained a navigable channel on that section of the Illinois River as well as locks at La Grange and Kampsville dating to the 1890s. Improvements in 1922 and 1931-32 expanded the original facility, necessary since the State of Illinois had transferred authority of the Illinois Waterway to the Army Corps during this time. The Illinois Waterway Project Office subsequently became “an important boat and barge maintenance facility” for the Army Corps.⁹

Part II. Structural/Design Information

A. General Description¹⁰

The site consists of a harbor, marine ways, and utilitarian buildings, in addition to a number of vessels.

The rectangular-shaped harbor has been reshaped and relined with sheet piling throughout its operational history.¹¹ The marine ways consisted of metal tracks that ran down a sloped shore into a basin protected from Illinois River traffic by a bulkhead. Boats in need of repair were maneuvered into the basin and then positioned on flat cars that ran on tracks. The cars were hoisted up the tracks to land where repairs could take place. The repaired boats were returned to the water via the cars and tracks. The marine ways were removed some time after 1996.¹²

⁷ Rathburn, “Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway,” Volume 2, pp. 646-648.

⁸ Drawing in Rathburn, “Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway,” Volume 2, p. 401, based on Sheet 64 of the Illinois Waterway River and Harbor Project, Government Moorings at Peoria, Illinois, dated September 30, 1980 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District.

⁹ Barbara J. Henning, “Illinois Waterway Project Office,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Section 7, Page 1; Section Numbers 8, 9, 10, Page 3. The Illinois Waterway Project Office Historic District was listed in the National Register in 2004. The contributing resources include the marine ways and harbor, Derrick Boat No. 3, The PEKIN, The ATLAS, Storage Building No. 304, Storehouse and Carpentry Shop, Garage No. 303 and Paint Sheds No. 1 and 2. Noncontributing resources include the new office building and garage, the machine & welding building, Storage Building No. 302, Barge No. 8, The PEORIA, and a radio repeater tower.

¹⁰ Description based on Rathburn, “Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway,” Volume 2, pp. 405-438 and fieldwork done by the HAER recording team from 2007 to 2008.

¹¹ Rathburn, “Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway,” Volume 2, pp. 407-408.

¹² Rathburn, “Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway,” Volume 2, pp. 405-406.

The earliest extant buildings are the Pattern Storage Building (Building No. 304), two Paint Sheds (Building Nos. 305 and 307), Garage (Building No. 303), and Storehouse and Carpentry Shop (also known as the Storage and Shops Building, Building No. 306). The Pattern Storage Building is a 1,925 square foot, one story building clad in corrugated metal with a gable corrugated metal roof. The front facade has two garage doors.¹³

Paint Shed No. 1 (also referred to as the Hose House, Building No. 305 on drawings) is a 120 square foot, one story building clad in corrugated metal with a corrugated metal gable roof. Paint Shed No. 2 (also referred to as Oil House, Building No. 307 on drawings) is larger at 480 square foot and is clad in standing seam metal with a standing seam metal gable roof.¹⁴

The brick Garage (Building No. 303) is a 2,262 square foot building with a flat roof. It features eight vertical lift garage doors on its southwest facade.¹⁵ The Storehouse and Carpentry Shop (Building No. 306) measures 10,750 square feet. The one story building is clad in corrugated metal and has a gable roof and five garage doors. Storage space is located at the northeast end of the building while the carpentry shop is housed at the other end.¹⁶

Several buildings have been added to the site throughout its operational history. In 1966, an Equipment Storage Building (Building No. 302) was built near the Garage (Building No. 303). The one story, 3,515 square foot building is clad in metal and has a gable roof. Four vertical lift garage doors punctuate the southwest facade.¹⁷

When the Joliet Project Office located near Brandon Road Lock and Dam closed in the mid 1980s, a Machine Welding Building (Building No. 308) was floated down the waterway to the site in 1984. The 5,000 square foot, one story, prefabricated metal building dates to 1970. The building has a gable roof, a vertical lift garage door on the northeast facade and metal industrial sash windows.¹⁸

Another garage was built on the site in 1990 to the east of the Machine Welding Building and north of the harbor. The prefabricated metal building has a gable roof and three vertical lift garage doors.¹⁹

The original office building was demolished after the construction of the new one in 1992. The new one story brick office features a porch with a gable roof supported on

¹³ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 411-412; Henning, "Illinois Waterway Project Office," Section 7, Page 1.

¹⁴ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 417-420.

¹⁵ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 415-416.

¹⁶ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 413-414.

¹⁷ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 429-430.

¹⁸ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 427-428.

¹⁹ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 425-426.

six columns on its main (southeast) facade. The main roof is hipped with a ventilator on top.²⁰

Building No. 309, probably built post-1996, has double doors on its front façade and a gable roof and is located near the Paint Shed (Building No. 305).

In addition to the buildings, a number of boats used in maintenance operations on the Illinois Waterway have been housed at the site, including the 1936 Derrick Boat No. 3, a work barge used for maintenance of the waterway; the 1943 PEKIN, a metal work boat used to maneuver barges; ATLAS, a work barge with a gate lifter dating to ca. 1950; the 1963 PEORIA, a push boat used to maneuver barges; and Barge No. 8, a work barge equipped with a diesel crane dating to 1989.²¹

B. Layout

The site is bounded by athletic fields to the north and east, marine ways and the Illinois River to the east and south, boat harbor to the south and west, and a road to the northwest. At the northern edge of the site is a row of structures, including (from west to east) the Equipment Storage Building (No. 302), Garage (No. 303), Pattern Storage Building (No. 304), Hose House/Paint Shed No. 1 (No. 305), Building No. 309, and just north of the marine ways, Paint Shed No. 2 (No. 307). The Storehouse and Carpentry Shop (No. 306) is at the center of the site. The Machine Welding Building (No. 308), garage and office are located from west to east along the harbor at the south edge of the site.

Part III. Sources of Information

A. Primary Sources

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "Government Moorings at Peoria," Illinois Waterway, Illinois, Chicago, Illinois. September 20, 1977, 1 Sheet.

B. Secondary Sources

Henning, Barbara J. "Illinois Waterway Project Office." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 2002.

Rathburn, Mary Yeater. American Resources Group, Ltd. "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway between 130th Street in Chicago

²⁰ Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 423-424.

²¹ For information on Derrick Boat No. 3, see Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 409-410; Henning, "Illinois Waterway Project Office," Section 7, Page 1. For information on the PEKIN, see Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 421-422. For more information on ATLAS, see Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 435-436. For more information on PEORIA, see Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 433-434. For more information on Barge No. 8, see Rathburn, "Architectural and Engineering Resources of the Illinois Waterway," Volume 2, pp. 431-432.

and La Grange.” Volume 2. Prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, Rock Island, Illinois. October 1996.

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated

Research was conducted in the Army Corps of Engineers records at the National Archives and Records Administration, Great Lakes Region, Chicago, but time constraints prevented thorough research of all records. Those records that were researched did not contain information about the Peoria Project Office.